

If you think about it, a lot of the challenges we're facing today are not so different than they were back in 1893 when this organization was founded. Think about it, right? [Laughter] We've got a new economy. And there was a new economy in 1893. And we've got to figure out how to make it work for everybody instead of just a few people.

We are overwhelmed by a big influx of immigrants from different kinds of countries, and so were we in 1893, and we have to bring everybody into the American mainstream. We are about to enter a new century with a lot of confidence but a lot of challenges. We have to do what we've always had to do at such times as Americans. We have to make sure we deepen the meaning of our freedom; we widen the circle of opportunity; we strengthen the Union of our people.

The Talmud says every blade of grass has its angel that bends over and whispers, "Grow, grow." Our children are blades of grass. You must be the angels.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Nan Rich, national president, National Council of Jewish Women; the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO); and the First in the World Consortium.

Statement on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

February 24, 1998

Today, a clear, bipartisan majority of the Senate voted for campaign finance reform. Now, only the obstruction of a minority stands in the way of a law that would strengthen our democracy. The opponents of reform are seeking to block this measure with partisan, unacceptable amendments, even an amendment to block the Federal Communications Commission from providing free air time to candidates. Let's be clear: A vote for these amendments is a vote for soft money, unregulated campaign contributions, and backdoor campaign spending. And that vote would be very difficult to explain to the American people.

Executive Order 13076—Ordering the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces to Active Duty

February 24, 1998

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 121 and 12304 of title 10, United States Code, I hereby determine that it is necessary to augment the active armed forces of the United States for the effective conduct of operations in and around Southwest Asia. Further, under the stated authority, I hereby authorize the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Department of the Navy, to order to active duty any units, and any individual members not assigned to a unit organized to serve as a unit, of the Selected Reserve.

This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 24, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 25, 1998]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 26.

Message to the Congress on Ordering the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces to Active Duty

February 24, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to title 10, United States Code, section 12304, I have authorized the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard, when it is not operating as a Service within the Department of the Navy, to order to active duty Selected Reserve units and individuals not assigned to units to augment

the Active components in support of operations in and around Southwest Asia.

A copy of the Executive order implementing this action is attached.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 24, 1998.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Report on
Chemical and Biological Weapons
Defense**

February 24, 1998

Dear _____:

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense, submitted pursuant to Condition 11(F) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Strom Thurmond, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Arlen Specter, chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on National Security.

**Remarks After Touring Tornado
Damage in Kissimmee, Florida**

February 25, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, first let me say a word of thanks to all of those who have given me this tour and who have been working so

hard since Monday. I brought down here with me our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, who's already been here; Attorney General Reno; Administrator of the EPA Carol Browner—both of them are from Florida, as I'm sure you know—and our Small Business Administrator, Aida Alvarez.

I want to thank Senator Graham and Congresswoman Brown and Representative Mica for coming down with me today, and to say that Congressman Boyd and Congresswoman Thurman also wished to come and could not because of their work requirements, but they expressed their concern and support.

I thank Governor Chiles and Lieutenant Governor MacKay, the leaders of the legislature who are here, Speaker Bronson, Minority Leader Senator Dyer, Senator Webster—I mean Senator Bronson, and—Representative Bronson and Speaker Webster.

Mayor Atkinson, thank you for making us feel at home today and for introducing us to some of your citizens and some of your winter visitors. I thank the Osceola County commissioners with whom I've met—Chairman Dunnick and others; General Harrison and the Florida National Guard; all the people who have been working on this. I had a chance to meet a number of them. I want to thank them for what they have done.

Some of you know that James Lee Witt, before he became the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, was the director of our State emergency program in Arkansas when I was Governor. Our State has the highest number of tornadoes per capita every year. But no matter how many of these I have seen over the last 20 years, I don't think anybody can fail to be moved and awestruck by the amount of damage that can be done, and the lives and the treasures that can be taken away in a matter of just a few seconds.

And I think we all acknowledge here today that what took just seconds to destroy will take weeks and months and, in some cases, maybe even years to rebuild. Some of you may have lost precious pictures, letters, service medals, other mementos of loved ones and family members that may never be able to be replaced. We know that. But it's also important for you to know that we understand that you'll be going through a period